



Georgia DOT Winter 2015 Weather Preparedness

Georgia DOT's Winter Weather Response Plan focuses on proactive and preventive efforts. Much of the plan includes strategies learned from research and peer exchanges with other state DOTs. Many initiatives have been implemented as a result of this research. They include:

General Facts

- Several contractors have signed agreements and are ready to join Georgia DOT to address hazardous winter precipitation.
- The Department's first priority is to keep the Interstate System open and passable for emergency responders and essential travel. Georgia DOT maintenance forces will treat all affected lanes on the interstates. However, depending on the severity of the storm, some lanes may be closed.
- Second priority is the highest volume state routes. This focuses on the most traveled routes first, keeping them open for emergency travel. Two-lane state routes could be closed to traffic until they are safe; or cities and counties can choose to work on those roadways.
- Nine new material storage locations have been added for a total of 30 - to allow for quicker, targeted and continuous response where needed.
- Georgia DOT's stockpile of materials has increased statewide to allow for heavier applications of salt and gravel through longer events, if needed.
- Three multi-lane snow plows have been added for a total of five.
- A Brine Pre-treatment Program has been added for metro Atlanta:
 - Brine treatment - a mixture of salt and water is used as a preventative treatment and is intended to limit the bonding of the ice to the pavement;
 - Ten 5000-gallon tankers are available to apply brine treatment to the interstates;
 - An automated brine production unit that includes a 100,000-gallon storage tank is in place;
 - Routes include I-285; all interstate routes inside I-285; and portions of interstate routes outside I-285.
- A coordination plan with Local Governments is in place to share information. Georgia DOT is working collaboratively to strategically pool resources and response.
- Georgia DOT outreach efforts include utilizing its existing website; changeable message signs (CMS) along the transportation network; coordinating with Outdoor Advertising Association of Georgia (OAAG) to distribute messages on electronic billboards; and postings on Facebook and Twitter.
- Multi-agency response plan includes:
 - Enhanced GIS equipment tracking to ensure clear knowledge of locations being treated;
 - Web-based program to monitor incidents;
 - Snow removal equipment operators are equipped with a communication device to share real-time conditions with their Area and District Storm Operations Center.

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- More than 2,000 Georgia DOT maintenance and construction employees are available for active duty across the state. District resources will relocate as needed to assist in affected areas.
- Georgia DOT maintains a staging area in most counties. These county maintenance buildings each stockpile salt, gravel, fuel and supplies needed for emergencies.
- Georgia DOT's Highway Emergency Response Operators (HEROs) will monitor traffic along I-85, I-75, I-20, I-285, GA 400, I-675 and I-575 in the metro Atlanta area to clear incidents and stalls from the roadway and assist motorists.
- In the metro Atlanta area, traffic operators at the Transportation Management Center will constantly monitor traffic cameras along the interstates looking for signs that roads are icing; they will relay those locations to the maintenance office. Traffic operators will take calls from metro Atlanta motorists through the 511 system. State Farm sponsors the HERO and 511 programs.
- Communications personnel across the state will be at the Transportation Management Center and the district offices to provide constant updates to the media.
- Communications personnel will provide updates to the public via Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/GADeptofTrans>).
- Citizens can also access roadway conditions at the Department's winter weather web site: (www.dot.ga.gov/winterweather).
- In addition to receiving regularly updated weather information from national sources, Georgia DOT monitors local weather reports..

Equipment

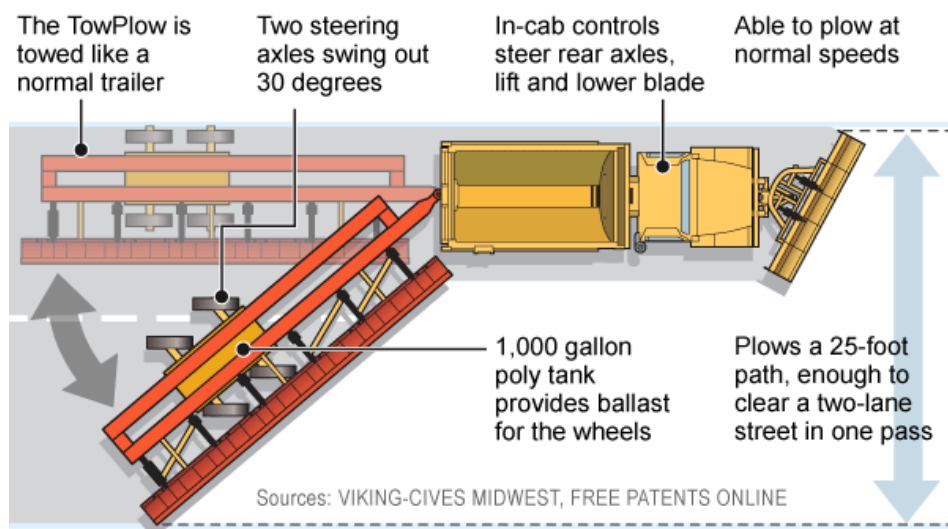
- Road Weather Information System (RWIS) – roadway sensors in 15 new locations around the metro area, one in Macon and 11 in north Georgia will help more confidently predict weather conditions on roads, including the ice, temperature, precipitation and wind. Locations and the number of sensors were determined by the GEMA taskforce.
- Additional cameras have been added to the Navigator Intelligent Transportation System to assist in monitoring and deploying resources during a weather event.
- Single and/or double-axle dump trucks with snowplows attached to the front to push the snow and ice from the roadways.
- Single and/or double-axle dump trucks with hopper spreaders or tailgate spreaders attached to the rear to distribute the salt/gravel mixture and brine used for de-icing the roads.
- Single and/or double-axle dump trucks with *both* salt/gravel spreaders and snowplows attached.

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- Multi-lane tow plows – allow one dump truck to clear two lanes in one pass. The Department has five tow plows to be dispatched around the State as needed to remove snow and ice from interstates and multi-lane state routes.



- Tractor-type motor graders for moving snow.
- Chainsaws for removing trees and branches from the roadway.
- Brine maker and tanks - Brine maker creates a liquid form of salt that can be stored for use as needed. New distribution tanks are added to the hopper spreaders that distribute the solid form of salt and gravel. The new saddlebag tanks allow an operator to spread the liquid mixture and the solid mixture together or just spread the solid mixture on the roadway using one dump truck. All new spreaders have liquid saddlebag tanks for distribution. District offices also have new holding tanks that can store up to 5,000 gallons of brine:
 - Ten 5000-gallon tankers are available to apply brine treatment to Metro Atlanta interstates; and
 - An automated brine production unit, including a 100,000-gallon storage tank, is in place.

Brine tankers and transporters



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Response Teams

Four types of teams are designated to respond to different incident types during a winter storm event:

- Brine distribution unit includes 10 brine distribution tankers that will dispense brine along Interstate 285 and all interstate routes inside I-285 up to 24 hours before the onset of a winter weather event. Brine tankers will be escorted by the Georgia State Patrol and Motor Carrier Compliance Division.
- Eighteen Interstate teams with 3-5 tandem dump trucks (trucks with snow plows and material spreaders attached) will treat and remove snow from roadway.
- Special Response teams will respond to “hot spots” independent of the treatment areas where the Interstate teams will focus.
- Traffic Strike Teams consisting of Georgia State Patrol, Motor Carrier Compliance Division, Georgia DOT Highway Emergency Response Operators, Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Forestry Commission and Georgia Department of Defense personnel will focus on clearing incidents on segments of I-285; I-75 and I-85 (inside the perimeter); portions of I-20; as well as GA 400 and State Route 166.

Snow and Ice Removal

- Keeping roads safe for emergency vehicles is the first priority.
- Interstates are cleared first, and then state routes from the most heavily traveled to the least traveled.
- The most common de-icing mixture is a 3:1 ratio of small “89 gravel” and sodium chloride (salt). It is effective in breaking up ice and snow until temperatures drop below 25 degrees.
- If temperatures dip below 25 degrees, calcium chloride is added to the gravel/salt mixture.
- To prevent ice from bonding to the roadway surface, brine will be used to pre-treat all interstates in the metro Atlanta and north Georgia areas.
- Georgia DOT will bring in crews and equipment from other areas of the state to help with particularly hard-hit areas when necessary.

Safety Tips

- *Avoid driving unless absolutely necessary; postpone travel until daylight hours when road conditions such as black ice are more visible.*

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- *Do not pass a Georgia DOT dump truck spreading the salt/gravel mixture, as gravel may kick up and could break car windshields. Follow at least 100 feet behind Department vehicles.*
- *Be aware of Georgia DOT crews working to clear the snow and ice from interstates and state routes.*
- ***SLOW DOWN*** at least half your normal speed and use a low gear as you drive.
- *Treat a non-working traffic signal as a four-way stop.*
- *Beware of black ice (especially on bridges) and watch for fallen trees or power lines.*

Materials By the Numbers...

Statewide, approximately...

- 2,041 employees on call covering 39,919 lane miles
- 40,120 tons of salt
- 44,029 tons of gravel
- 401 snow removal equipment units
- These statewide district resources can be moved to most-needed areas during a winter weather event.

District 1, Northeast Georgia...

- 328 employees on call covering 5,667 lane miles
- 10,938 tons of salt
- 6,639 tons of gravel
- 160 snow removal equipment units
- Contact Teri Pope – (404) 274-6436

District 2, East Central Georgia...

- 274 employees on call covering 7,518 lane miles
- 3,375 tons of salt
- 7,249 tons of gravel
- 65 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Kyle Collins – (478) 552-4656

District 3, West Central Georgia...

- 342 employees on call covering 3,600 lane miles
- 5,389 tons of salt
- 2,603 tons of gravel
- 15 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Kimberly Larson – (706) 741-3439

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District 4, Southwest Georgia...

- 285 employees on call covering 8,135 lane miles
- 432 tons of salt
- 500 tons of gravel
- 12 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Nita Birmingham – (229) 326-5435

District 5, Southeast Georgia...

- 306 employees on call covering 6,882 lane miles
- 700 tons of salt
- 4,174 tons of gravel
- 12 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Jill Nagel – (912) 424-6643

District 6, Northwest Georgia...

- 257 employees on call covering 5,117 lane miles
- 7,657 tons of salt
- 9,184 tons of gravel
- 65 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Mohamed Arafa – (770) 359-9523

District 7, Metro Atlanta...

- 249 employees on call covering approximately 3,000 lane miles
- 11,629 tons of salt
- 14,680 tons of gravel
- 72 snow removal equipment units
- Contact: Natalie Dale – (404) 631-1814 or Annalysce Baker (770) 986-1788